

In a recent column recognizing this milestone, long-time host Steve Barnes explained the focus of the program has always been the matters that matter. There is no doubt the discussions featured on this program have encouraged Arkansans to advocate for change, influenced policies and procedures at all levels of government and brought attention to undercovered issues.

Arkansans have had a front-row seat to the evolving political climate of the last four decades as a result of "Arkansas Week." We have seen a lot of changes and the voices on this show have provided valuable insight. The "Arkansas Week" roundtable panel is a signature segment of the show that has brought together the best and brightest journalists and experts in the State to deliver unique perspectives in a manner that expands on the stories covered in print and allows for a broader discussion beyond the headlines. I have been honored to join this mainstay numerous times and talk with Steve as well as other hosts and guests to contribute to Arkansans' awareness of the issues and events that directly affect them.

Throughout the years, "Arkansas Week" has brought together people from across the political spectrum to share their thoughts. The program has always fostered an atmosphere where its acceptable to disagree without being disagreeable, a feature truly appreciated by the viewers and guests alike. It is even more important at a time when polarization is too common.

As we celebrate its storied history of delivering information to citizens in all corners of our State, I applaud the dedication of Steve Barnes and the men and women who work tirelessly each week to create "Arkansas Week." Our State is grateful to all those who have been part of this program over the past four decades on being a reliable, informative source for news.●

RECOGNIZING JILL'S HOMESTEAD

● Ms. ERNST. Madam President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week it is my privilege to recognize Jill's Homestead of Chariton, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week for the week of March 6, 2023.

Jill's Homestead is an example of the American entrepreneurial spirit at its finest. Before starting her own business, Jill Godby had a longstanding passion for leather crafting, and she had a special knack for creating trendy leather earrings that she often wore herself. Over time, her hobby grew as friends and family wanted their own leather earrings. Prompted by the demand from her family and friends, in 2018 Jill started to list some of her earrings on Facebook; shortly thereafter, interest in her products took off,

and her hobby turned into a side hustle. Given her products' popularity online, Jill started to sell her earrings at local farmer's markets and at any trade shows she could find. Eventually, her hobby-turned-side-hustle led her to quit her day job and turn her passion into a small business. However, Jill did not foresee the once-in-a-generation pandemic that was right around the corner. When disaster struck and businesses were forced to close, Jill refused to become discouraged. She doubled down on her products and ideas and worked long nights to grow the business. Today, that hard work has paid off; Jill has been able to scale up the company to employ a small, all-female, workshop crew. Furthermore, she now has her own workshop to make her leather goods on the town square in Chariton.

In a world that emphasizes the mass production of goods, Jill's Homestead wants to craft products built to last a lifetime. They work to achieve this goal through using high-quality leather, experienced craftswomen, and an online shop to find customers that share their mutual values of sustainability, self-sufficiency, and natural living. Each member of her team of seven craftswomen are dedicated to creating the highest quality product possible. The business primarily sells their products online on their website created through the ecommerce platform Shopify. Additionally, they open their workshop once a month as they pride themselves on providing great customer service and thus want to form and maintain genuine connections with their customers in person. In fact, their commitment to customer relations is what initially grew the company, with Jill hosting weekly auctions on Wednesday nights of her products through Facebook Live. Jill's Homestead has grown from only selling earrings to now offering luxury handbags, accessories, and home goods inspired by the lifestyle of rural Iowa.

As a small business, Jill's Homestead recognizes the need to give back to the Chariton community. They are part of the Chariton Area Chamber/Main Street which is committed to revitalizing the community through economic and cultural endeavors. Through the chamber, Jill's Homestead was able to give a significant donation to the Chariton Downtown Square Sidewalk Project in order to restore the historic town square. Additionally, the small business is very generous in offering their products to be used as prizes for fundraisers. Jill's Homestead donated close to 10 items for the Hops for Hospice raffle fundraiser; the money raised went to an assistance fund to provide hospice care for those who cannot cover the cost. Additionally, they recently contributed a number of their handbags for the Designer Bag Bingo night fundraiser, the proceeds of which benefit the volunteer services at Lucas County Health Center which provides free and low-cost services to the community.

As a small business that will soon turn 6 years old, Jill's Homestead has been able to achieve massive success, despite extraordinary challenges. Even after she faced unprecedented challenges at the very start of her business, Jill refused to give up hope and shifted her business to online selling. Through perseverance and grit, Jill grew her business during an uncertain economy, and her hard work has more than paid off. Not only has Jill achieved impressive growth, her business has been featured on Iowa news segments, and Jill was invited to our Nation's Capital to tell her story and discuss the issues facing women business owners. Since the beginning of their operation, Jill's Homestead has been motivated to offer the highest quality leather goods to their customers and consistently serve them with "Iowa Nice" customer service. I want to congratulate Jill Godby and the entire team at Jill's Homestead and commend them for their continued commitment to excellence in their work both locally in Iowa and throughout the world. I look forward to seeing their continued growth and success in Iowa.●

RECOGNIZING PSC DISTRIBUTION

● Ms. ERNST. Madam President, as ranking member of the Senate Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship, each week I recognize an outstanding Iowa small business that exemplifies the American entrepreneurial spirit. This week it is my privilege to recognize PSC Distribution of Iowa City, IA, as the Senate Small Business of the Week for the week of February 27, 2023.

The story behind the origin of PSC Distribution is one of hard work and knowing an opportunity when you see one. Jim Nesmith was born and raised in Jasper County in the early 1900s. Wanting to give back to his community, he became the State senator for Jasper County in the 1940s. During this time, he also became a salesman for A.Y. McDonald, a wholesale distributor of plumbing pumps and waterworks based in Des Moines. Both of these jobs exposed him to greater Iowa, outside of his native Jasper County. Jim recognized that there was a great opportunity for growth in Iowa City with the expansion of the University of Iowa, so he decided to take a chance and open his own wholesale plumbing distributorship on May 1, 1951.

For the past 70 years, PSC Distribution has been supplying eastern Iowa residents and businesses with the materials they need to excel in the plumbing industry. Currently under the fourth generation of family ownership, cousins Tom Balmer and Jennie Wunderlich, along with her husband Ben Wunderlich, continue to grow and guide the company with innovation and excellence. In 2010, the PSC plumbing showroom expanded and rebranded into a luxury showroom named Studio